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Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of new developments and the assistance accorded to Mongolia by the Secretariat and relevant United Nations bodies since the issuance of the last report on this subject in 2004 (A/59/364). During the reporting period, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific held a series of consultations with Mongolia on ways and means to consolidate Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. A growing international recognition of Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status can be seen from the increased references to that status at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), published and distributed widely a report on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. The findings and recommendations of the report have been incorporated in the common country assessment for the period from 2007 to 2011 and in all five of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2011) outcomes and related outputs. To follow up on the recommendations of the report, UNDP is providing assistance to Mongolia in developing a long-term national development strategy based on the Millennium Development Goals as well as addressing the country's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. Furthermore, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP have been engaged in assisting Mongolia to build technical and human capacity for disaster management.

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I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 59/73 of 3 December 2004, entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", the General Assembly invited Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its independent foreign policy, its economic security, and its ecological balance, as well as its nuclear-weapon-free status. It requested the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies to continue to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the aforementioned necessary measures. It also requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

II. Activities related to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status

2. Since the submission of the last report of the Secretary-General on this subject (A/59/364), the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs, through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. The Centre organized two meetings (on 17 February and on 13 June 2006) of a consultative group of United Nations departments, programmes, funds and agencies to follow up on the two studies conducted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities and human security; exchange information on each other's activities aimed at implementing General Assembly resolution 59/73; and discuss the preparation of the 2006 report of the Secretary-General on the subject. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and representatives of Mongolia attended the meetings.

3. Mongolia has continued vigorously to pursue international recognition and institutionalization of its nuclear-weapon-free status by working to establish an international norm on the status. The emergence of such a norm can be seen from the continued references to the Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels, which represents a tangible indication of its growing international recognition. Documents containing references supporting Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status include:

- Declaration of the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico City from 26 to 28 April 2005 ("We express our recognition and full support of Mongolia's international nuclear-weapon-free status.").
- Joint Statement by Mongolia and China, Beijing, 29 November 2005 ("The two sides viewed that Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status would contribute to strengthening regional stability. The Chinese side expressed its support for Mongolia's endeavours to institutionalize that status.").

- Joint Statement by Mongolia and the Republic of Korea, Ulaanbaatar, 9 May 2006 ("President Roh expressed the Republic of Korea's support for Mongolia's endeavours to institutionalize its nuclear-weapon-free status at the international level, as an important measure of strengthening the non-proliferation regime and contributing to confidence-building measures in North-east Asia and beyond.").

- Final Document of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 27 to 30 May 2006 ("The Ministers believed that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status are positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.").

4. Mongolia also continued to pursue the implementation of its domestic legislation on its nuclear-weapon-free status. In this connection, Mongolia established in May 2006 an inter-ministerial working group to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the Law of Mongolia on its nuclear-weapon-free status and resolution 19 of the State Great Khural (Mongolian Parliament) on measures to be taken in connection with the adoption of the Law. The working group comprised representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry of Fuel and Energy, Ministry of Nature and Environment, Ministry of Defense, Nuclear Energy Commission, State Specialized Inspection Agency, National Emergency Management Agency, General Intelligence Authority, Customs General Authority and Blue Banner, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

5. In its report, the working group found that Mongolia's endeavours to implement article 4.2 of the Law, which stipulates that "transportation through the territory of Mongolia of nuclear weapons, parts or components thereof, as well as of nuclear waste or any other nuclear material designed or produced for weapons purposes shall be prohibited", have been hampered by a shortage of trained personnel and the necessary equipment. The working group, therefore, advised that Mongolia should seek assistance from the international community in the following areas: provision of up-to-date, highly sensitive detection equipment, portable detection instruments and X-ray equipment to screen cargo; upgrading the database on cross-border movements; training of customs and border patrol officers in areas such as export controls, biological and related security standards and the prosecution of groups and individuals engaged in terrorist activities involving weapons of mass destruction.

III. Non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's international security

6. The English and Mongolian versions of the report entitled "Economic and Ecological Vulnerabilities and Human Security in Mongolia", prepared by UNDP in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP, have been published and widely distributed and are also available on the UNDP Mongolia website.

7. The findings of the report have been discussed in various forums in Mongolia, such as at the launch of the 2005 Human Development Report on Trade, Aid and

Security, and at a special meeting organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with relevant Government ministries and agencies, NGOs, United Nations agencies and the donor community.

8. The findings and recommendations of the report have been incorporated into the United Nations common country assessment for the period from 2007 to 2011 and in all five of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2007-2011) outcomes and related outputs addressing all forms of vulnerabilities in Mongolia.

9. To follow up on the recommendations of the report, UNDP is currently supporting the Government in developing a long-term national development strategy, based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), aimed at systematically addressing all the MDGs, including the Goals related to the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development. UNDP will also help the Government to mobilize and align foreign aid to meet specific MDG targets of Mongolia that include economic and ecological vulnerability issues. The long-term strategy will become the basis for Mongolia's annual and medium-term plans and budgets.

Economic vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia

10. To address Mongolia's economic vulnerabilities, UNDP, in partnership with relevant Government agencies of Mongolia, has provided support to the following projects:

- An integrated programme entitled "Enterprise Mongolia" was launched in 2005, focusing largely on the rural area and aimed at developing capacity for entrepreneurship, innovation, access to microfinance, product development, marketing, networking and policy reforms (Partner agency: Ministry of Trade and Industry).
- A project to promote trade for human development and enhancement of Mongolia's trade negotiating capacity was launched in 2005, which includes analysis of trade and its impact on human development; capacity to negotiate better terms and reduce trade deficits; and promoting Mongolia's networking capacity with other landlocked countries (Partner agency: Ministry of Trade and Industry).
- Through the Urban Poverty Pilot Project UNDP is supporting capacity development for participatory governance and community empowerment in order to improve service delivery in the "ger" areas of Ulaanbataar City (Partner agency: Municipality of Ulaanbataar and Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour).

Ecological vulnerabilities and human security in Mongolia

11. To address Mongolia's ecological vulnerabilities UNDP provided the following specific support:

- Three projects to protect biodiversity and engendered species in the Eastern Steppes, Great Gobi and Altai-Sayan regions, including regional cooperation

with China and Kazakhstan in the Altai region (Partner agency: Ministry of Nature and Environment).

- Project to improve sustainable grasslands management and the livelihoods of herders (Partner agency: Ministry of Food and Agriculture).
- Project to improve energy-efficient housing, using alternative methods of insulation (Partner agency: Ministry of Urban Development and Construction).
- Project to build technical and human capacities for disaster management at the national and local levels. In addition, UNDP facilitated the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination mission of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to assess disaster preparedness capacity and monitor progress on recommendations. A working group was established within the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia in August 2005 to develop a National Framework of Action (2005-2015) to strengthen Mongolia's disaster preparedness and response capacity (Partner agency: National Emergency Management Agency).
- United Nations joint policy analysis of the access of poor population to water and sanitation in Mongolia, followed by two United Nations joint missions to advise on a strategy for a United Nations joint programme on water and sanitation.
- Preparatory assistance to assess and identify entry points for addressing issues of land degradation and desertification.

IV. Conclusion

12. The increased references to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, at the bilateral, multilateral and international levels, are evidence of its growing international recognition. In this connection, the United Nations has continued to extend its assistance to Mongolia for the promotion of its international security and its nuclear-weapon-free status. Furthermore, the United Nations system as a whole in Mongolia will continue to assist Mongolia in coping with economic and ecological vulnerabilities, especially with regard to follow-up on the recommendations contained in the report on Mongolia's economic and ecological vulnerabilities. The Secretary-General hopes that the assistance provided by the United Nations will contribute to achieving sustainable development and balanced growth in Mongolia during the current period of political and economic transition, reinforcing Mongolia's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.